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COTTAGE INDUSTRIES AND THEIR ROLE IN NATIONAL ECONOMY.

OUR ECONOMIC PROBLEMS.

ECONOMIC PLANNING IN INDIA.

INDIAN POLITY.

Etc.

THE
GANDHIAN INSTITUTIONS
OF WARDHA

By

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*Dedicated to
Maharaj Kumar Sir Vizia
For His Services
to the
Cause of the Andhras*

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PREFACE TO THE REVISED EDITION

IN this new edition, the book has been extensively revised and new chapters included. Even though the first edition was exhausted within a few months of its publication, and was uniformly well received by the Press and the Public, the author regrets that he could not bring out the revised edition till now. The request of his friends in this regard have been irresistible and the author feels that his efforts will not have been in vain if more Gandhian institutions are inspired and established throughout the country as a result of perusing this volume.

R. V. RAO.

Bombay, May 1947.

AUTHOR'S NOTE TO THE FIRST EDITION

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Introduction

Sri Visweswar Rao has taken much pains to collect together most interesting information about the manifold activities of Gandhiji, represented in this booklet by various institutions which are so graphically described. The real method of studying a personality is not to probe out his biography but to study the impress that personality makes on the environment. In this way, if one wishes to get a picture of Gandhiji, no Kodak can do justice to the fact of the man, but this booklet catches that which can never be portrayed by the most sensitive of plates. I hope those who wish to get a glimpse of Gandhiji will get what they want by perusing this handy volume. The public owe a debt to the author for this vivid picture.

Had I been consulted on the title of the booklet, I would have suggested "The de facto Capital of India" for, service of the country is the function of a capital city.

CHAPTER I

GANDHIJI'S SEVAGRAM ASHRAM

FAR away from the bustle and hustle of life, the Gandhi Ashram at Sevagram looks like a different world altogether. It is well-known that many a fateful decision which affects the present and the future of India is taken in this little hut of Gandhiji at Sevagram which is but a hamlet of Wardha and which is aptly spoken of as the unofficial capital of India or to put it in the words of Mr. J. C. Kumarappa "The *de facto* capital of India since the service of the country is the function of a capital city." Round him are established the Hindustani Talimi Sangh, the All-India Village Industries Association, the Gandhi Seva Sangh, the Go-seva Sangh, the Mahilashram and several other associations working for the good of the nation.

The man who is battling against the biggest empire in history stays here not giving sermons on the mount but practising his philosophy of life and giving an object lesson to the nations of the world particularly as regards the constructive programme. It may be said that we may have big plans for the economic development of India. Grandiose plans may be prepared in the seclusion of secretariats and these may place before our mind's eye a painted picture of prosperity which may after all prove to be a mirage, a delusion or even an utopia. We may say "industrialize or perish," "mechanization is the best"; but we must know that in the ultimate analysis it is the man-power or labour that is the true wealth of the country and all our plans must give gainful occupation to the abundant

labour force we have in India. Our emphasis must be upon the human factor and it is no use imitating the West and its civilization which has blazed the trail of destruction. His emphasis upon the constructive programme is, therefore, full of tremendous possibilities. It is but natural that simplicity is the key-note of the Ashram life, even though Gandhiji was still recently like a volcano without fire in the absence of the working committee members still he was full of hope since he is a firm believer in our destiny.

Nearly twelve years ago, when Gandhiji left Sabarmati, he was invited by the late Jamnalalji to stay at Wardha. He accepted the invitation, but a few months of stay in Maganwadi made him feel that he should be away from the buzz of the town and stay with villagers and work for their good. It so happened, he visited Segaon (a village about four miles from Wardha). It attracted him, and he decided to shift from Wardha to Segaon. The late Jamnalalji happened to be a *malguzar* of the village, and he gladly placed his extensive grounds at the disposal of Bapuji, as the ashramites endearingly call him.

CYNOSURE OF ALL EYES

Within a few months, several huts were built and they soon developed into a regular Ashram, resembling the ashrams of the ancient Rishis. There is another place, not far from Wardha with the same name, and it so happened Bapuji's letters used to miscarry. Hence arose the need for changing the name of the village. Because Bapuji started the Ashram for "seva" or service, it was renamed Sevagram (village of service) and it is this place that has now become the Whitehall of India and the cynosure of all the world. Though an

insignificant village with not even a cart tract leading to it, it has become a centre of attraction and a place of pilgrimage. Just as nobody returns from Benares without visiting Visweswara's temple, so also no visitor to Wardha fails to visit Bapuji's Ashram. It may be mentioned that everything in the Ashram is simple, and no decorations are to be found as at Adyar, or at Gurudev Tagore's Santiniketan.

The Ashram recognises no differences of race, language or caste. Persons belonging to various races, religions and castes stay there. There is a common mess for all and Bapuji takes food along with them. Gandhiji is striving to make it an ideal place to live in and every attempt is being made to make it self-sufficient. His ideas regarding diet, buildings, organization and all problems affecting the country are put into force here. That is the reason why he invited General Chiang-Kai-Shek to visit him in the Ashram so that the latter might see for himself some of his ideas put into action.

Gandhiji believes in the dignity of labour and holds that no work is mean or degrading. So, all ashramites are expected to clean latrines and look to sanitation themselves. In this respect, he sets an example to others. All the ashramites work from morning till night according to time-table.

GANDHIJI'S HUT

Bapuji is of the opinion that man should establish contact with Nature and should lead the life of a villager who lives amidst Nature. The Ashram prayers are, therefore, held in the open and are completely cosmopolitan. They are from all religions. A Japanese ashramite used to begin the prayers with a chant to

Lord Buddha, but after the outbreak of hostilities with Japan, he was interned, but even now his chant forms the first item in the programme. Visitors to the Ashram are struck by the grandeur of the prayers.

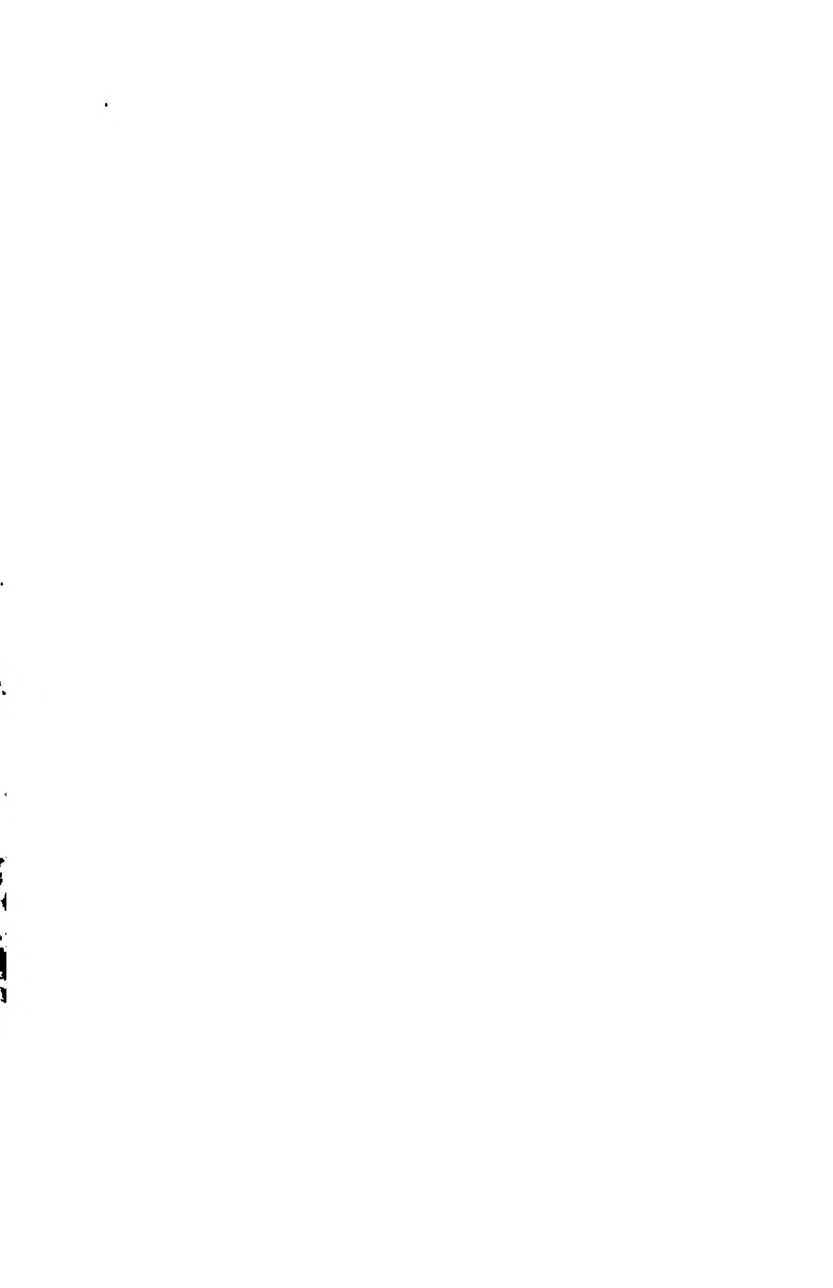
Gandhiji himself sleeps in the open and when Lord Lothian visited the ashram, Bapuji advised him to sleep out-of-doors assuring him that he would not catch cold. After a good deal of hesitation, Lord Lothian agreed to this proposal and he did not catch cold. Gandhiji is thus unflagging in the preaching of the ethics of open-air life. He often preaches it with the fanatical zeal of a propagandist.

Bapu's hut is a small one. It is here that the numerous letters he receives are opened. His secretaries open the letters and show him the important ones. Alas! Mahadev Desai is no more. He indeed out-boswelled Boswell; but for him posterity would have lost the spoken words of Gandhiji. Gandhiji has also remembered his services and no leader has done so much to honour his secretary as Gandhiji does. Every evening, he goes to the building where he stayed and spins for one hour. Gandhiji as the readers know takes spinning as the greatest factor in his achievement of freedom. Gandhiji sits on a mat and even as he is speaking to visitors, he spins on the "Dhanush Takli" which has been invented by Sri Bharatananda, a Polish engineer, who has now come under the magic spell of Gandhiji.

Mahatmaji observes silence on Mondays not for rest but for getting through his writing work which piles up during the week. He insists on speaking in Hindustani but whenever Indians who do not know the language visit him, he speaks with reluctance in English.



Gandhiji taking an evening stroll.



with an admonition that they should learn the national language of India.

To many, it may be news that a leper was among the ashramites. He was a veteran Sanskrit scholar, for whom Gandhiji had great reverence. Shunned by everybody, he came to Bapuji, as he said, to die. Some years back he was so vexed with life that he wanted to starve unto death. In the meanwhile, Gandhiji's treatment with "Sarsu Oil" did him good and so he gave up his fast.

Gandhiji housed him in a separate hut in the ashram. To people who were afraid of the disease, Gandhiji humorously remarked : "If you are afraid and go near him, it will catch you."

At one time, Gandhiji had to devote two hours a day for him and who will not be surprised at seeing Bapu giving a bath to a leper ?

Many leaders who are ill, come to Sevagram for treatment. Sardar Vallabhbhai, Rajen Babu, Dasappa, Acharya Narendra Dev and others at one time or other were here for treatment.

REPRESENTATIVE OF 'DARIDRANARAYAN'

Mahatmaji decides the disputes of the Sevagram village. Besides, a large number of people come here to get their domestic quarrels settled.

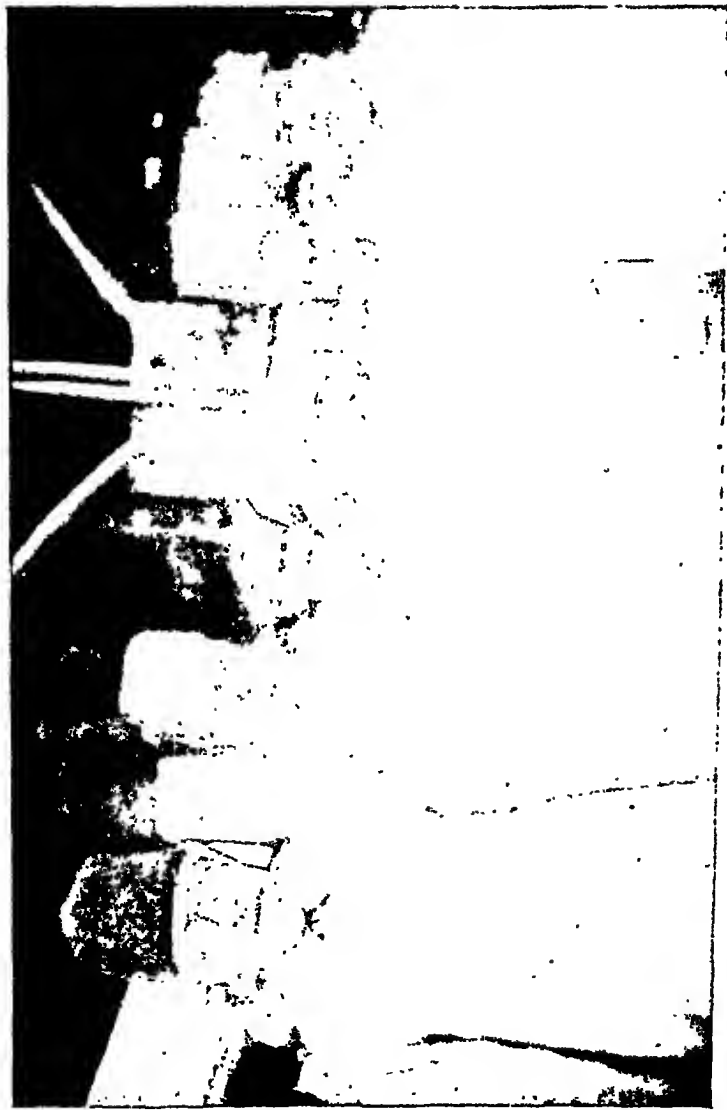
Gandhiji is the true representative of *Daridra-narayan*. He represents seven lakhs of Indian villages, whose life is typified in the Ashram at Sevagram. He lays great stress on spinning. That is why when Broomfield, the District Magistrate of Ahmedabad, put him the question, "What is your profession," he said, "agriculture and spinning." Bapuji never makes any distinction between the high and the low, and always keeps his feelings under control. He wakes up at

four in the morning and works till night with a short interval for rest. He is always cheerful and full of humour. Such is the life of the Mahatma in the Ashram and anybody will be struck by the great service he is rendering to mankind. That is why the simple and unostentatious Ashram of Sevagram has attracted the attention of the world.

The Cream of India gathers here. Gandhiji wants to live for 125 years. Sitting in the tiny village created by his magic wand, he is giving a new lead as a sentinel would do on the watch-tower with the followers ready to answer the clarion call. He has now given a new orientation to the activities of the All-India's Spinners' Association. Every wearer of *Khadi*, he says must spin yarn and every spinner must wear it. One can visualize that a bright era is opening for *Khadi*.

"Earn while you learn" may be a good slogan for recruiting people for war effort, but this has equal application to the spinner who earns while he learns. Not only this basic education or *Nai-Talim* as it is called emphasises this point. Gandhiji is no doubt trying his hand at many things. What magnet is to a needle, he is to constructive activities. Critics may call them Gandhi's last fad or Gandhian Eutopia; still they are enough "to brace up India's millions to a new way of life in accordance with our ancient traditions and culture." Our great men are what we make them and the sooner we realize their greatness and follow them the better it will be for the regeneration of India.

Gandhian ideals of simplicity based upon non violence and decentralization are bound to have their effect upon the war-ridden world. The distinctly important place attached to cottage industries and rural uplift in Indian Economics even by theoreticians



... the Cream of India gathers here. . . .
*Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, the late Netaji Subhas
Chandra Bose, at Wardha.*



Pandit Jazabharlal Nehru at Wardha. The late Seth Jammalal Bajaj in foreground.

writers is entirely due to Gandhiji. He has indeed made simplicity sublime and poverty beautiful. To the mind that is moved by the spirit and to the eye that can see, Gandhism shall never die.

Coming to the lighter side, representatives of the Press want to flash something big every day which is rather difficult. That is why they have to try to get some inspiration from their fertile brain and flash something about the projected fast, what next, etc., Gandhiji is the Bapu of not only Sevagram but of India and Sevagram is indeed India's real capital where the various institutions for political and economic regeneration of India are working. He represents the seven lakhs of Indian villages whose life is typified in this Ashram. That is why the simple and unostentatious Ashram at Sevagram has become the cynosure of the world. Let us hope and pray that Gandhiji may fulfil this mission in life and live long !

THE ASHRAM 'DUGDHALAYA'

THE Ashram runs the *Dugdhalaya* in order to ensure adequate supply of good cow's milk and ghee for the use of the ashramites and the villagers and to improve the quality of the cows of the locality. The Ashram encourages the villagers of Seyagram to maintain cows and buys milk from them. In order to see that cows are fed well, the *Dugdhalaya* purchases milk on fat percentage basis. This incidentally prevents adulteration of milk and ensures a supply of pure milk. As a result of these methods, it is stated that the average yield has increased from one lb. to six lbs.

Experimental work on improved ghee-making for villagers has been in progress for some time past. Sri Y. M. Parnerkar, who is in charge of the work, has succeeded in his experiments to obtain more ghee from butter with less expense. The methods are such as can be worked with advantage by villagers. Further experiments are going on, and when completed, will be made known to the public.

Till now, short-term courses of training in dairying were offered, but it was found from experience that the duration of these courses should be increased. Hence the period of training has now been increased to one year.

Other interesting features are the store for concentrates, the cow improvement fund, and the maintenance of a good breeding bull. Gandhiji, it

need not be mentioned, takes great interest in the welfare of the cows and insists upon the use of cow's milk both by the ashramites and others. His patience is indeed marvellous and one wonders how he finds time for all these things. But then he is a Mahatma.

CHAPTER III

THE HINDUSTANI TALIMI SANGH

To the north of the Ashram are the buildings of the Hindustani Talimi Sangh. In 1938, the Indian National Congress accepted the scheme for basic education and authorised the formation of an All-India Board of Education to work out a practical programme for India. Thus, under Bapuji's guidance, the Hindustani Talimi Sangh, as this Association came to be called, was started.

The present system of elementary education, as admitted on all sides, is purely literary in character and not related to the realities of life. This Association believes that if education is to be rooted in reality, it must centre round a craft. The first report of the National Education Sub-Committee mentioned several possible crafts like spinning, weaving and agriculture. The whole idea was that the craft chosen should be "rich in educational possibilities" and offer "natural points of correlation." Education should be "stimulating" and if possible "self-supporting." All of us are aware of Gandhiji's ideas on self-supporting education, and the Talimi Sangh claims that this method alone removes many of the defects of the existing system of education.

SOUTH'S POOR RESPONSE

During the short period of six years, the Talimi Sangh has made much progress in spreading the idea of basic education. Bihar, United Provinces and Kashmir deserve special mention in this connection. Unfortunately, the Madras Presidency did not

register much progress in this direction. As a leader remarked, "People there think that there is no education without English and basic education has no English in it." There is a certain amount of truth in this. Public opinion should assert itself as it did in the case of Orissa, when the Government decided to abolish the Basic Schools in that province. That is, to quote Professor Harold J. Laski, "Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty."

The headquarters is very busy developing the technique of correlated teaching, preparation of suitable educational literature and doing propaganda work. Special mention should be made of the untiring zeal and work of Sri Aryanayakam and his wife, Srimati Ashadevi. A certain amount of sustained and enlightened interest has been created in the country and to put it in the words of Sri Aryanayakam, we need to "transform this interest into a constructive programme of work."

NEED OF THE MOMENT

An experimental basic school with spinning as the basic craft is conducted at the headquarters under the direction of Srimati Ashadevi. Careful records of work of children and the development of their personality are kept. All this goes to show that it is no longer a theoretical scheme but a practical programme of national education.

But it is faced with many obstacles. As the latest report of the Sangh says: "The technique of correlated teaching is not yet fully understood and practised." Another difficulty is the paucity of required literature.

Those interested in universal education that will

enable our children to develop their personality so that they may be useful citizens of the country, will have to take up this difficult task of educational reconstruction. The need of the moment is a band of trained workers and intelligent co-operation from the public. Behind the whole scheme is the hand of Bapuji, whose ideal of self-supporting education was once criticised as a "visionary scheme." Now, it has withstood the storm of opposition. The Mahatma has thus proved to be the world's greatest practical teacher.

CHAPTER IV

THE MAHILASHRAM

As one returns from Sevagram, on the outskirts of Wardha, one sees a number of buildings in a picturesque plateau of about thirty acres. These are the buildings of the Mahilashram. The land was the gift of the late Jamnalal Bajaj to the cause of women. The Mahilashram is an All-India institution, which came into prominence after the arrival of Mahatmaji at Wardha in 1933. Till then, it was called Kanya Ashram and was a part of the Satyagraha Ashram, then under the charge of Sjt. Vinoba Bhave. Vinobaji spared no pains to see that the Ashram prepared women workers for the service of humanity.

Wardha has undergone a thorough transformation after Mahatmaji's arrival and the Kanya Ashram, as it was called then, came also under his magic touch. Under Gandhiji's advice, the name was changed to Mahilashram and for the first time, it was decided to admit widows, married women and grown-up girls.

Sri Shantabai and her late father donated three lakhs of rupees for the Ashram and the Mahila Seva Mandal is running the Ashram under the guidance of Bapuji.

ALL-ROUND EDUCATION

Mahatmaji does not like that it should be a replica of the existing Mahilashrams. As per his advice, admission is thrown open to one and all in India, irrespective of caste, creed or colour. The medium of instruction is Hindi, but provision is made to admit non-Hindi knowing girls, and to give them special

coaching in Hindi. The girls are expected to cook for themselves, and look after sanitation including cleaning of latrines. All the girls are required to learn spinning and carding. In fact, Bapuji always insists upon Hindi, spinning and carding as the *sine qua non* for the attainment of national unity and making the country self-sufficient.

It is with a view to train women workers and to give them an all-round education that a new orientation was given to the curriculum. There are three departments. One corresponds to the High School course, extending over a period of five years at the end of which the "Vinit" certificate is given. In addition to general subjects like History, Geography and Civics, subjects which will make them good housewives are also taught. For example, special emphasis is laid on domestic science, sewing, home accounts and music. Perhaps, many readers are not aware of the fact that Gandhiji does not subscribe to the view that educated girls should remain unmarried and therefore free from the duties of household. In fact, he advocates marriage and says that in married life, a girl can do more service with the help of her husband.

NO TUITION FEE

There is also the teacher training section. Admission is given to those who have passed the Matriculation Examination or the "Vinit" examination of the Mahilashram. The course is for two years. The object is to train a band of women teachers for primary and middle schools. Training is given in such a way that the girls will fit into the changing conditions and situations of life. In such a training, an attempt is made to co-ordinate life at home and school. Modern

girls decry cooking and try to put up a "show" but that leads them nowhere. On the other hand, the training given here is based on sound principles, related to the environment, and is in accordance with our best traditions.

No tuition fee is charged. Girls pay for boarding alone. About 50 per cent. of them get scholarships to meet their board expenses. Every effort is being made to attract students from all parts of the country.

The late Jamnalalji took great interest in the Mahilashram and was the leading figure in all its affairs. It was he who gave the Ashram its dwelling sites and his name is remembered with much affection and regard by both the pupils and the staff.

THE COMMERCE COLLEGE

IN C.P. and Berar, till 1940, there was no commerce college at all with the result that students from this province had to migrate to other provinces to receive commercial education.

A born commercial genius that he was, the late Jamnalal Bajaj was able to start a commerce college with the help of 1½ lakhs of rupees donated by Sri Govindram Saksaria and the college has been named after the donor.

Besides imparting sound, theoretical and practical training to the students in the various branches of commerce, an attempt is made to develop their personality by building up their body, mind and character. The aim is not only to train them as efficient business men but also as responsible social and national workers by providing them with expert knowledge, breadth of outlook, organizing capacity and force of character. True to Gandhian ideals, thanks to Principal Agarwal, the institution has done a lot for the cause of the country.

There are several commerce colleges in India and they are practically a replica of the Arts Colleges, laying little stress on imparting practical training to the students. With the co-operation of business men of Bombay, Calcutta and Nagpur, the college is able to send students in the summer vacation, for training in practical business routine. Till now, no other commerce college in India is able to make such arrangements and as such, this is a unique institution.

BANK RUN BY STUDENTS

The college bank run by the students themselves under the supervision of a member of the staff, not only provides many facilities to the students but also is a useful medium for imparting practical training in banking. The Bank of Nagpur is the agent of the college bank and the cheques of the college bank are honoured by many other banks in India.

For the convenience of poor students, a lending library has also been started. Books are lent for the whole session and the college only charges for depreciation which ranges from 10 to 20 per cent. of the prices. This has been a great boon to the students.

Such, in short, is a brief survey of the Commerce College which has been able to attract attention from all parts of India and is in keeping with the spirit of Wardha—the Unofficial Capital of India.

CHAPTER VI

ALL-INDIA VILLAGE INDUSTRIES ASSOCIATION

It is well known that India is predominantly a land of villages and that the bulk of the population is to be found in villages with agriculture as their mainstay. Any scheme of uplift must be directed towards the poverty-stricken, half-fed people who inhabit them. In the past, Indian villages had rich industries which are still unsurpassed in craftsmanship. But they are swiftly dying. It was with the object of helping the villagers to add to their income by taking to profitable cottage industries that the All-India Village Industries Association was started. In this chapter an attempt will be made to give an account of this work, which is not insignificant.

The word "village" had come to connote everything contemptible: ignorance, disease, dirt, huts not fit for habitation, starvation, industries unscientifically carried on, grim poverty, etc. Since all civilization and culture have their roots in village life, how did this downfall of the villages come about? Should we accept the present state as it is or do we need to change it? If the latter, we have to consider what brought about this change. These are some of the questions that have begun to trouble thinking minds.

For several years past, the Indian National Congress has taken up village reorganization and reconstruction as one of the main items in its constructive programme and when Gandhiji took up the lead of the Congress, he brought into the forefront the idea of a non-violent society where the well-being of the country is measured



*Gandhiji at the All-India Village Industries Association,
Wardha.*



*Shri J. C. Kumarappa, Organiser and Secretary,
A.I.V.I.A.*

by the well-being of the masses. Hence it was that at the Forty-eighth Session of the Indian National Congress, held on 14th December 1934, the All-India Village Industries Association was formed in pursuance of a resolution sponsored by Gandhiji, and Shri J. C. Kumarappa was requested to build up the organization. It was to be a self-supporting, industrial and non-political organization working under the advice and guidance of Gandhiji, having for its object "village organization and reconstruction," including the revival, encouragement and improvement of village industries and the moral and physical development of the villagers of India. It may be mentioned that, till then, there was no central organization for the resuscitation of village industries and the all-round development of Indian village life.

During the last few centuries, village industries have decayed. Food crops in recent years gave place to money crops. To satisfy our economic needs we had to depend on imports from abroad. The middleman has become the bane of production and distribution. A survey of the villages shows that economic uplift of the villagers lies in devising ways and means for the increase of occupations and industries so that their income may be greater. We have thus to "open avenues of gainful occupations for all."

Maganwadi, where the headquarters of the All-India Village Industries Association are located, is a few minutes' walk from the Wardha Station. The extensive sites are the gift of the late Jamnalal Bajaj.

There is a misapprehension that the idea behind the All-India Village Industries Association is to "go back" and stem the tide of progress. But this is not the case. What the Association is striving for is

decentralization of production and thus avoiding the evils of capitalism. There was a time when its activities were viewed with suspicion by the Government. When the Association was launched there was no ground prepared for it. There were a number of industries in a decaying or a dying state. There was a crying need for research, training, the opening of new markets, the creating of good-will of consumers, etc. During these seven years the Association has succeeded in making the people "village-conscious" and has developed their economic thinking along the lines of the decentralization of industries by fixing minimum wages, organizing exhibitions and giving training in village industries.

When "village industries" were mentioned, people used to take a patronizing attitude, considering village work as merely philanthropic. During these seven years, the Association has shown how village industries stand on their own merits.

A visit to Maganwadi clearly shows how we can help the resuscitation of village industries. The Association started work with an immediate programme for village sanitation and hygiene and an improved diet for the villager. Accordingly, it included in its programme the popularization of hand-pounded rice, hand-ground flour, pure ghani oil, and village-made gur. It has produced for domestic use paddy and flour chakkis which are in great demand in various parts of the country.

The Association naturally is supporting such industries as are of wide application, require little capital outlay, and are capable of being tackled by each village without outside help. The material necessary is practically universal; little or no capital is required and the necessary skill can be acquired in a few days' training.

A visitor to the Gram Udyog Bhawan (Village Industries Court) will be struck by the valuable work done there. It has several sections devoted to industries such as paddy husking, flour grinding, oil pressing, gur making, bee keeping, paper making, and soap making out of indigenous materials. Besides these, tanning and leather work, dairying, horn work, buston making, coir spinning, etc., are going on in several centres in India under the auspices of the Association.

A few passing remarks may be made about the various industries. It is admitted that the deficiency in the nutritive value of polished rice is the cause of several diseases. In addition, it has been calculated that if people give up milled rice and take to consuming hand-pounded rice, the output can be increased in addition to providing employment to several lakhs of people. When the bran and pericarp are removed, in the process of milling, rice loses at least 10 per cent. of its weight. In these days of scarcity of foodstuffs, it is important to realise the need for using hand-pounded rice. What applies to paddy husking in rice-growing tracts equally applies to flour grinding in wheat-growing tracts. With the Maganwadi flour chakki of eighteen-inch diameter, one can grind with ease five pounds of flour in an hour.

Similarly there are millions of palm trees in India and, if they are utilised for making gur, several crores' worth of gur can be produced. Each tree yields in the season gur worth about Rs. 5. It is, therefore, a sound economic proposition that efforts should be made at making gur from palm juice.

India is the largest producer of oilseeds in the world, yet a large quantity of oilseeds is either exported or pressed in oil mills. Consequently, the village oil

man has lost employment and oil cake, a nutritive article of feed for the cattle, is also lost. Indeed Mahatmaji has been insisting upon self-sufficiency in production, if the villagers are to be prosperous. Ghani oil is said to be nutritive and efforts should, therefore, be made at preventing exports. Surplus or stale oil can be used in making soap, paints, varnishes and also for lighting.

On account of the kerosene shortage, we have been forced for lighting to look to other devices than kerosene lamps. The Association has therefore taken up the problem and succeeded in evolving a lamp, the "Magan Dipa" as it is called, for burning vegetable oils. These lamps are in great demand.

The bee-keeping section clearly demonstrates how this industry requires little outlay, running expense and space, and how valuable it is as a subsidiary to agriculture.

A visit to the paper-making section shows how paper can be made from all kinds of village waste, such as old palmyra thatching, rags, waste paper, jute waste, bamboos, waste straw, plantain stalks, etc. It is a simple industry needing little equipment, and little technical skill. At a time when paper imports are stopped, we should do well to develop the industry. Like Khadi in dress, hand-made paper in stationery has become a symbol of nationalism. The Association is trying its best to improve the quality of paper so that hand-made paper can sell on its merits and not on sentimental grounds. Further, as Gandhiji says, hand-made paper is artistic. In fact, when Gandhiji once visited the paper department, he observed that even though hand-made paper might not be able to compete economically with mill paper, yet it could sell on its merits since it showed the artistic capacity of village life. Even

here the Association wishes to bring modern scientific knowledge and skill to bear on the industry in order to make it more efficient so that people can get profitable employment. That is why the Association recently decided to make use of machinery in the production of pulp. To quote Shri J. C. Kumarappa : " To increase efficiency, we shall do all in our power to utilise mechanical aids which will not lend themselves to the exploitation of others."

The buildings of the Gram Udyog Bhawan are all simple, being constructed of bamboo and mud. They represent typical village life. They can be easily kept in condition.

The training-school for village workers conducted by the All-India Village Industries Association is the first of its kind in India. Besides giving training in the various industries, students receive instruction in Gandhiji's Teachings, in the principles underlying the All-India Village Industries Association, in health, hygiene, sanitation and book-keeping. Considering the vastness of the area to be served, the difficulties of language and the nature of work to be done, there is great need for each province to have its own training-school.

The Association has members, agents, affiliated institutions, certified shops, and recognised producing centres throughout India to spread the message of the All-India Village Industries Association and to carry on the work in accordance with its programme. As it was found to be difficult to organize the Association's work in the provinces from Wardha, it has been decided to have provincial organizations. To disseminate the results of the work done, publications on special subjects and industries are undertaken, along with a periodical, *Gram Udyog Patrika*.

On the whole, during these twelve years, the Association has succeeded in making the people understand that the economic welfare of the nation depends upon the villager. No discerning critic can say that the work so far done is insignificant, though it might have touched only the fringe of the problem. We require a band of workers imbued with missionary zeal, to carry the message of the All-India Village Industries Association to the villagers. Gandhiji is always practical in his plans and the All-India Village Industries Association is the concrete result of one such plan.

To sum up, then, the object of the All-India Village Industries Association is not at all to go back but to improve the lot of the villagers by decentralized production and to teach them to make a worthy use of their idle time. It works with a far-reaching economic philosophy which aims at establishing a new economic order where man will not exploit his fellow-man. It is, in fact, Gandhiji's attempt to uproot imperialism, war and violence by establishing a new economic order where exploitation is unknown. True to the heritage of India. Gandhiji is showing to the war-ridden world the economic forms of non-violence and peace. It is hoped that the public will co-operate in the work of the All-India Village Industries Association in its attempt to bring about the prosperity of India, the land of villages. In the economic life of India, village industries are bound to play an important part. They will exist as long as India lives in villages. These industries cannot fail to remind us of the times when they were the marvels of the world. They have lived all these long years and if given some attention, they can still meet our demand.

CHAPTER VII

THE MAGAN SANGRAHALAYA

At the eastern end of the extensive grounds of Maganwadi, there is a picturesque building. It is the museum for khadi and village industries. It is named after the late Maganlal Gandhi, who helped Mahatmaji to revive the spinning industry in its early stages. Indeed, his premature death was a great loss to the cause of economic uplift of our people. It is in the fitness of things that this museum devoted to village industries should be named after Maganlal Gandhi. It was opened by Mahatmaji on 30th December 1938.

The museum aims at the economic betterment of the masses. Other museums there are in India, which are located in bigger buildings and filled with costly articles. But this museum is unique inasmuch as it attempts to enrich the life of the villagers by showing how small scale industries can be started. All the exhibits are subordinated to this aim and directed to achieve the goal, viz., educating the visitor in regard to possible avenues of industrial occupation.

The building, though simple in design, has a massive structure with a central hall and two wings. One wing is devoted to Khadi and the other to village industries. At the entrance are the images of Yaksha and Yakshi of the Chalukyan type of architecture—guardians of this temple devoted to industries.

As we enter the Khadi section, we see a number of *charkhas*, one an improvement on the other till we come to the Magancharka. It is worked with a pedal, as in the sewing machine and one can spin about 1,000 yards

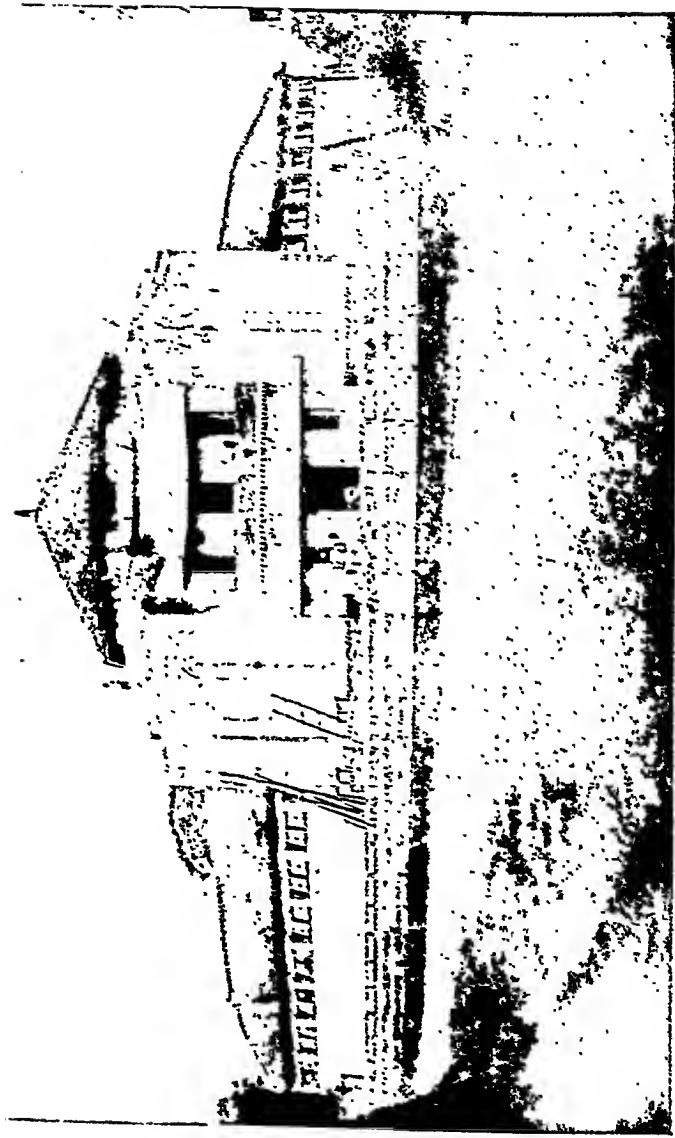
per hour. In this section, there are exhibits of the various types of cotton grown in India, with details of rainfall necessary, soil, etc., as well as their fibre quality. Next are the implements required for ginning, carding and making of *taklis*. Many condemn the village industries movement as not progressive, but the improvements effected in the various implements during the last 15 years by the All-India Spinners Association through tireless research and experiments, as is shown by a series of models exhibited here, will come as a revelation.

VARIED EXHIBITS

Woollen and silk goods which are 700 years old; yarn from 6 to 450 counts including yarn spun by Gandhiji, Vinoba Bhave, Deshbhakta Konda Venkatappiah and others; specimen of "Kalankari" dyeing from Masulipatam, carpets from the Punjab and cotton goods from every part of the country are exhibited. Detailed information is given regarding raw materials used, tools required, and processes involved. Exhibits of *taklis* fitted on a stand, and worked by a leather bow are also found.

In the previous chapter, mention was made of industries like paper-making, oil-pressing, flour-grinding, bee-keeping, soap-making, etc., which are developed in the Udyog Bhavan. In the Magan Sangrahalaya, these industries are represented by models of improved implements and the raw materials required.

Collections are increasing rapidly. The idea behind is not unchanging permanence, but the living present which is changing. Models are exhibited which give the visitor an idea of the complete process of the industry. The wooden-grooved *chakki* in which grooves are



*The Magan Sangrahalaya,
(Village Industries Museum) at Wardha.*

arranged along the grain of the wood, requires special mention and people of the South who are accustomed to use milled rice, may take to this paddy-husking *chakki*. The exhibits dealing with bee-keeping show how this industry can be taken up to relieve unemployment among villagers. Implements for paper-making, oil-pressing, tanning, *gur*-making, coir and pottery are also to be seen here.

Khadi spun and woven in Italy and other continental countries and presented to Gandhiji when he was on his European tour, is exhibited here. In fact, all articles of interest which Gandhiji receives are sent to the Sangrahalaya, to be exhibited here.

UNIQUE INSTITUTION

Ours is a poor country where there is scarcity of capital but not of labour. The Association is striving its best to improve the economic lot of the masses. The Indian National Congress has adopted the *charkha* as its emblem, and Khadi as the uniform of its votaries and village industries as the *sine qua non* for the success of its programme. Of late, owing to foreign interests, village industries have declined, thus increasing the problem of unemployment.

In his inimitable capacity to get the proper diagnosis of the malady, Gandhiji focussed public attention on Khadi and other village industries as the only way of resuscitating Indian villages. The Magan Sangrahalaya is thus a unique institution, which seeks to help the villager to start industries of his choice. If he is attracted by the exhibits dealing with any industry, he may at once go to the Udyog Bhavan, which is in the same compound and see the actual working of that particular industry. Such facilities we do not have in

any museum in India and thanks to Mahatma Gandhi, the Unofficial Capital of India, we boast of a first class museum of All-India importance, which does not concern itself with exhibiting costly articles which are not within the easy reach of our villagers, but with exact facts and figures relating to the running of various village industries.

It is desirable that each province in India should have such a Sangrahalaya.

CHAPTER VIII

THE GANDHI SEVA SANGH

THE description of Mahatma Gandhi as the greatest man now living is not a mere piece of appreciative rhetoric. He is the greatest because he has identified himself with the masses not only of India but of the whole world. By his philosophy of life, he has revolutionized and spiritualised Indian public life. He has, indeed, given our country high ideals and a practical formulæ.

Very few are perhaps aware that, we have the Gandhi Seva Sangha, with its headquarters at Wardha, which did meritorious service to the country and propagated the Gandhian philosophy. The simple reason is that it never troubled itself about publicity. It is a brotherhood of seekers of truth trying to propagate the principles of the master.

The circumstances under which the Gandhi Seva Sangha came into existence are very interesting. It arose out of the exigencies of the political situation in 1923, when Gandhiji was undergoing a long term of imprisonment, and when his own aims and ideas seemed to be in the melting pot. The late Sjt. Jamnalal Bajaj, who had been one of the most ardent followers of Gandhiji, founded the Gandhi Seva Sangha to provide whole-time workers for the non-co-operation programme and for promoting the ideals of truth and non-violence amongst the people. The programme and policy of the Sangha went on evolving with those of the Congress during the years 1924 to 1929, with the result that the object of the Sangha came to be national service

according to the principles of Mahatma Gandhi and was confined to carrying on the constructive programme of the Congress, viz., hand spinning, anti-untouchability and national unity.

THE SANGHA DEVELOPS INTO A BROTHERHOOD

After 1934, the Sangha's policy and programme became more defined and it developed into a brotherhood of persons who owe allegiance to common ideas and seek to pursue them. As regards the ideas of the Sangha, one cannot do better than to quote Gandhiji : "I should be satisfied if your Sangha became a register of workers who have complete faith in all activities which are the concrete expression of truth and non-violence, or rather of non-violence (for the practice of non-violence is impossible without an acceptance of truth). Thus let no member say that he believes in truth and non-violence but does not believe in handicrafts or Khadi and service of the villagers there—through or that he believes in truth and non-violence and does not believe in Hindu-Muslim unity, or in the removal of untouchability. If you meet such a one you may tell him that it may be possible that he is a believer in truth and non-violence according to his own conception, but not according to Gandhiji's conception of them and that he cannot therefore be a member of the Sangha. Beyond this, your Sangha has no credal, regional, or institutional limitations. Your members may belong to any caste or creed, any race or nation."

This will make abundantly clear the difference between the Sangha and institutions of an apparently similar nature. "This is," as the late Mahadeo Desai wrote, "not to claim any superiority for the Sangha but to emphasise its universality so far as India is concerned."



The late Shri Mahadev Desai reading a letter meant for Gandhiji.

A PARENT INSTITUTION

It will be recalled that at the time when the Gandhi Seva Sangha was started, there was no All-India organization for constructive programme of any kind. The A.-I.V.I.A., the Talimi Sangha and numerous other associations that later came into existence, under the ægis of the Congress, were not even visualized then. The Gandhi Seva Sangha is thus the parent body which supplied a band of workers for spreading the message of Gandhiji far and wide. Service of the humanity through service of the nation, by means of truth and non-violence became their end and aim.

At first, attention was concentrated on Khadi production in all the provinces. Besides, the members also directed their attention to the resuscitation of village industries, Harijan uplift, etc. By 1940 the A.-I.V.I.A., the A.-I.S.A. Harijan Sevak Sangha and the Talimi Sangha were doing their work in their respective spheres and the members of the Gandhi Seva Sangha joined these various institutions.

WHY IT WAS FOUNDED

Therefore, the Sixth Conference held at Malikanda in Bengal, considered the advisability of continuing the membership of the Sangha. Mahatma Gandhi attended the session. Paying a tribute to the ideals of the Sangha, he said that in it we find Hindu philosophy in a new form. Even if there was to be an iota of untruth and himsa (violence) it should perish.

It was here that Gandhiji expressed his views on the future of the Sangha. He mentioned that the idea behind starting the Sangha was to give a fillip to the constructive programme and now that other associations were started to devote themselves each to a

THE GRAM SEVA MANDAL

THE Gram Seva Mandal had its origin in the Satyagraha Ashram, which was started in 1930. But, in view of the Salt Satyagraha Movement, the Satyagraha Ashram was confiscated by the Government. When the movement was called off, the Gram Seva Mandal was started with the purpose of doing service to the villagers. It was laid down in the constitution that such service should be based upon the principle of non-violence and truth, and that every effort should be made for the political moral, cultural and physical welfare of the people.

The activities of the Sangh may be divided under several heads:—Khadi (including carding, spinning, weaving and marketing the products); Saranjam Karyalaya (where all the implements for Khadi production are manufactured); Go-seva Charnalaya (tanning) and Go-sala (dairying); and the Swaraj Bhandar, which was recently opened by Gandhiji, where the idea of Khadi yarn as basic currency is being worked out.

In the Khadi section, training is given in carding, spinning, weaving, etc., and an attempt is made to market the output. Villagers come here, spin and get wages. Thus, it is showing the ways of profitable employment to villagers. Several kinds of *charkhas* are used. With Magan Charkha, which is worked with a pedal, as in the sewing machine, one can spin 1,000 yards an hour. There is the weaving department, wherein people of Wardha give the yarn spun by them to be woven into cloth. Improved methods of weaving are also tried.

LEATHER INDUSTRY

In the Go-seva Charnalaya, attempts are being made to get the best leather out of the skin of dead animals. Generally, we presume that the best leather can be had only out of the skin of living animals which are slaughtered. At present, the skin of dead animals is, therefore, wasted and the village "Chamar" is helpless to adopt improved means and methods of tanning. This huge national waste can be stopped by encouraging and improving non-slaughtered leather. The Charnalaya is doing work in this direction. Besides tanning, it is also engaged in making use of every part of the dead animal such as fat, flesh, blood, bones, horn, guts, etc., which are usually allowed to go waste. It receives orders from all parts of India, which is in itself a testimony to the quality of its products. Last year, in tanning and leather manufacture section, goods worth nearly Rs. 40,000 were produced. Training in tanning and manufacture of leather goods is also given and students from all parts of India are admitted.

In the Go-sala, every attempt is made to improve the local breed of cows and to supply only cow's milk to the people. Gandhiji appeals to people to take only cow's milk and its products as against buffalo's milk. The Go-sala sells cow's milk, ghee, butter, etc. A visitor to the Go-sala will be struck at the simple but hygienic way in which the place is kept. It is not beyond the means of the villagers and it is an example to the villagers as to how cows may be kept and looked after.

Charkhas, taklis and other instruments for Khadi production are manufactured in the Khadi Saranjam Karyalaya. This institution gives employment to hundreds of people. Numerous orders are received from

all parts of India, but it would be better if people received training in such institutions, and started such places of their own so that local talent may be employed. What we want at the present time is decentralization in production.

KHADI CURRENCY

The Swaraj Bhandar is a recent institution, which was opened by Mahatmaji during the National Week last April. For the first time, the idea of khadi yarn as currency is being worked out here. The idea is that currency should be backed up by articles. Tickets are given in exchange for yarn and they serve as the medium of exchange, which can be exchanged for articles of everyday use sold by the Swaraj Bhandar and its allied institutions. In the course of his inaugural address, Mahatmaji dwelt at length on the benefits of this system, which is being worked out by Acharya Vinoba Bhave. In order to see that no counterfeiting is possible, it is proposed to issue tickets with water-marks.

It is at present worked under controlled conditions and the tickets are backed by yarn deposited by members. But, naturally, at present not all the requirements of individuals can be met by the Swaraj Bhandar. For several articles, one has therefore to go to the bazaar where he has to use the Government currency.

The extensive grounds of the Gram Seva Mandal were all donated by the late Sri Jamnalal Bajaj.

This, in short, is the work of the Gram Seva Mandal. Pioneer work such as this should serve as an object lesson to our leaders and people in other parts of the country.

CHAPTER X

THE GO-SEVA SANGH

THERE is no creature on earth which has been more serviceable to man than the cow. Since the beginning of history, she has contributed to human prosperity. The nursing mother of man is the cow and that is why she is called *Lokmata*.

Unfortunately, the problem of the cow has not received the attention it deserves. Ours is purely an agricultural country, where the bullock supplies the power for agricultural operations and the cow supplies milk, which is an essential element of our diet. In spite of it, the position of the cow now is deplorable. Children need milk for their growth, adults need it to maintain their strength and the aged to sustain their life. The yield of the cow in our country is low. In other countries, like America and Britain, where butter and milk consumption is more, the average expectation of life is more, whereas in India, the average expectation of life is 23 years and consumption of milk only about 1/16 seer.

Under these circumstances, it was considered necessary to place the problem before the country in its proper perspective. A conference of those interested was summoned by Gandhiji and an association to concern itself with problems relating to the cow and the bullock, viz., the Go-seva Sangh was started on the 30th of September, 1941, with the late Sri Jamnalal Bajaj as president. To begin with, the Sangh proposes to start model Go-shalas (dairies), where efforts will be made to improve the breed. As it is, India possesses

a fourth of the world's cattle population. But, unfortunately, her cattle, as Mahatmaji remarked, are in a worse condition than even her men and women.

JAMNALALJI'S INTEREST

Towards his last days, the late Jamnalalji took much interest in cow protection. He used to spend much of his time in a hut near the Sangh, taking personal interest in cow protection and it was here that his mortal remains were cremated. His services to cow protection can never be over-estimated. As Mahatmaji said once, "The service of the cow will satisfy Jamnalalji's spiritual thirst. It is with this end in view that I have entrusted this work to him."

The Go-seva Sangh is attempting to bring about alround improvement of the cow and its breed. The problem of stud bulls, increase of pasture lands, reform of *Go-shalas* and *pinjrapoles* and starting new ones on improved lines, promotion of the use of cow's milk, and research into improving the breed, educating public opinion in favour of the use of the skin, bones, flesh, etc., of dead cows, manufacture of different articles of utility out of them, and training workers for cow services, are the various problems now attracting the attention of the Sangh.

Immediately after the death of the late Jamnalalji, his wife Janakiben donated 2½ lakhs, being her share of the estate to the Sangh and is devoting her time for cow-service as per Gandhiji's advice. She has been elected as the president of the Sangh in the place of her husband and she proposes to go on an all-India tour in connection with cow protection.

The Sangh requires the services of trained men, who can be sent to different parts of the country.

India, as Gandhiji suggests, may be divided into a number of units and *Go-shalas* started in each. It is proposed to inspect the *Go-shalas* and suggest ways and means for their improvement. It is hoped that all provinces will start branches of the Go-seva Sangh and work in collaboration with the All-India Go-seva Sangh at Wardha.

CHAPTER XI

CHARKHA IN INDIA'S NATIONAL ECONOMY

WORK OF THE ALL-INDIA SPINNERS' ASSOCIATION

(Many say that the Charkha has become the symbol of Indian nationalism. This may be the politician's point of view, but if we examine the economic arguments in support of Charkha (the spinning-wheel) we can easily find that hand-spinning as a cottage industry, given the necessary aid by the public and the State can give gainful occupation to the abundant labour force in India.)

GANDHIJI has once said and rightly too "If we have faith in our ideal, we should pursue it with unfaltering courage." Shastras have proclaimed that truth alone conquers. That is the universal law. If at times it seems to fail in life, it does not prove that the law is imperfect. It only proves the imperfection of the individual practising it." What a pity it is when we are experiencing an acute shortage of cloth and villagers are languishing for want of subsidiary occupations, we have not even considered the economic potentialities of this industry which is rightly said to be the livery of our freedom. Let us remember that we cannot multiply Bombays and Calcuttas all over the country. We must find employment for the rural masses and others in towns, which means harnessing the human labour that has been running waste.

Whether the Charkha is anything more than a

stop-gap, a device which has to be adopted in the absence of a suitable alternative is beside the point. From the economic point of view we should remember that hand-spinning is one of the oldest of cottage industries in India and it was only after the economic transition characterized by the competition of cheap machine-made goods and increasing urbanization that this once flourishing cottage industry declined. In spite of it, thanks to the encouragement of a few rich people and the inherent advantages of it to serve as a subsidiary occupation to the agriculturists in their own houses, this industry persisted at least in some places. The master-mind of Mahatma Gandhi gave a fillip to the revival of Charkha and the Swadeshi movement. The Indian National Congress has rightly given Charkha a central place in its programme of its economic uplift. It was in pursuance of this ideal that the All-India Spinners' Association was started "To finance and direct the production and sale of Khaddar to its various production centres and sales depots." According to Mahatma Gandhi, the revival of Khadi is a part of the national wide campaign for rural reconstruction. That is why times without number he has said "the Charkha is the sun round which all other village arts and crafts should evolve."

WHY CHARKHA SHOULD COME TO STAY

While several people say that there is no meaning, in encouraging the Charkha in these days of rapid industrialization while some well-known economists have even dubbed Mahatma Gandhi as a mystic dabbling in politics and economics, still we should remember that it was he who has built up institutions to foster his ideas and given them a concrete shape. That is

why we find that the tendency at present has been to study Gandhian economics a subject which was once a taboo.

The one argument in support of hand-spinning is that it is very well suited to the economic and social conditions of our people. It gives employment to the large numbers of our rural population in their own natural surroundings. The largest of small-scale industries is hand-loom weaving which gives employment to about 6 million people. The cotton textile industry employs only one-tenth of that number. It is of course true that the total production is not so large as indicated by the numbers employed. One of the important factors we have to consider is that the use of hand-spun yarn instead of mill yarn would make the working classes in towns and villages less dependent on mills. That is why the Charkha not only supplies cheap and durable clothes to the villagers but also serves as an occupation subsidiary to agriculture. We know that the agriculturist is idle for nearly six months in the year. The use of machinery and the need for industrialization need not detain us because they are beside the point.

For Gandhiji this question has extra economic considerations. Ultimately "his economic philosophy springs from a certain view of the end of good life as he conceives it." This is an age of planning. We have to consider what planning is. As the note for the guidance of the sub-committees of the national planning committee observes "planning is not only to be considered from the point of view of economic and the raising of the standard of living but must include cultural and spiritual values and the human side of life." That is why it may be said that we need not

answer questions like "Can the Charkha spin as good yarns as the power spindle? Can the Charkha give full-time occupation to the people? The only point that may be mentioned here is that the Charkha gets a few rupees even at the door a fact which cannot be ignored. That is how as Mr. G. D. H. Cole observes: "Gandhi's campaign for the development of the home-made cloth industry—Khaddar is no more fad of a romantic age to revive the past but a practical attempt to relieve the poverty and uplift the standard of the Indian villager."

We should also remember that hand-spinning requires little outlay in running expense which is not so in the case of a spinning mill. We need not be carried away by the industrial developments of the West. For a long time agriculture is bound to be the mainstay of the people; in which case, the agriculturist should be enabled to work during the periods of agricultural inactivity. We should remember that handicrafts like spinning alone will enable the worker to have at least a subsistence living.

Another argument in support of Charkha is that the young, old, infirm and even the blind can take to it and eke out his or her livelihood. Even so far as equipment and appliances are concerned, we should say that they are so simple that they can be made by the village carpenter. The slivers can easily be produced locally.

THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE ALL-INDIA SPINNERS' ASSOCIATION

Several economists refer to the work of the Spinners' Association the headquarters of which is at Wardha and say that it has been able to produce only 3 million

pounds where as the yearly demand is for 13 hundred millions. It is a pity they fail to consider that this Association insists on minimum wage and a great part of the price we pay goes towards payment of wages. In our country, capital is scarce and labour abundant and our anxiety should be to have not labour saving but labour absorbing appliances. There has been in recent years an attempt to improve the technique of production and even as against high prices, one has to say that these help the distribution of wealth which means they will contribute largely to the welfare of the people. The Spinners' Association has been able to provide employment to large numbers of rural population in their natural surroundings. Let us remember that as against the capital of 50 crores invested in textile mills, the Association with a capital of 50 lacs has been able to find employment to over half the number engaged in the mill industry. Even in the matter of tools and processes, we must say they have undergone revolutionary changes and the Charkha-sangh has been trying to bring developments of science within easy reach of the masses. The evolution of the Magan-charkha Dhanush-takli, etc., are pointers in the direction.

YARN CURRENCY

Mahatma Gandhi has even gone to the length of suggesting Khadi Yarn as Currency. As Gandhiji has recently said "If the people appreciate a scheme of yarn currency and yarn collection, yarn will be the means of procuring goods worth crores. Physical labour will be wealth and easily compete with capitalists." He has indeed visualised yarn currency and two experiments are being attempted at Nalvadi (Wardha)

and Bezwada. He feels that they can be extended all over India. Money in the form of yarn "increases not by interest but by industry and labour of spinners." If the public understands the scheme through the instrumentality of yarn goods worth crores can be produced and physical labour will indeed become money and easily stand in competition with capitalists. To quote Gandhiji in support of Khadi yarn as Currency "In my part of the country, shell and seedle & almonds were used as coins accepted by the people and the State Treasury. They had no intrinsic value. They were a measure of people's deep poverty. They could not afford the lowest metal coin. Five shells would buy them a little vegetable or needle. I have suggested a measure which will not be soon taken, but which will always have an intrinsic value and which will have its market value also. For the present and by way of experiment I have suggested a very length of a single strand of yarn as the lowest measure and to be used in dealing principally with the spinners and generally with small towns. The spinners can have an 'order book' with supplied an against their quantity of yarn."

NEW ECONOMY OF RURAL INDIA

It is a matter of common knowledge that, as per the wish of Mahatma Gandhi, the Charkha-yajni Society decided that part of the price of Khadi should be paid in yarn which should either be spun by the purchaser himself or by the members of his family. Khadi has won for itself a place of honour in society and in social organisations with its idea of decentralisation of production. Gandhiji wants that every member of Khadi should spin yarn which is not only an easy affair. He has also demonstrated that it is possible to 'reduce'

according to basic methods, popularly known as "The Wardha Scheme," Khadi can be introduced in the villages through 'Nayee Talim' and cloth produced by children will be sufficient to clothe the entire village.

CONCLUSION

It is in the fitness of things that Gandhiji calls Khadi as the sun of village industry, and compares various other handicrafts to planets in the solar system. The only point is that if we have faith in our ideal, we should pursue it with unfaltering courage. Without help from the State, not much can be done. The State should provide finance, improve processes, equipment and give facilities for research and marketing so that we are able to produce goods at a cost and return comparable to those of other competing methods of production. They should encourage the production of Khadi and village industries. There is little doubt therefore that the Charkha offers itself as one of the most suitable village industries giving employment to our partially unemployed and unemployed which involves the harnessing of all human labour which has been practically running to waste on account of the precarious character of Indian agriculture and the absence of suitable subsidiary occupations. At a time when progress is usually associated with large scale industrialization, it is good that the Charkha movement has demonstrated the need for the resuscitation of village life by decentralization of production. Let us repeat once again that we cannot repeat Delhis and Calcuttas.

Wardha is also the headquarters of the Rashtra Bhasha Prachar Samiti to spread the knowledge of Hindustani in which Acharya Kaka Kalekar and others are engaged.

ACHARYA VINOBAJI'S ASHRAM AT PAUNAR

Just a few miles from Wardha, is the famous ashram of Acharya Vinoba Bhave, where several experiments in regard to sanitation, khadi and basic education are being carried out. Acharya Bhave, like many others, says that the great need of Indian education is science. That is why in whatever he does, he aims to be scientific.

The experiment of basic education, in which Acharya Bhave takes great interest, is being worked out in the Elementary School which has been transferred from the control of the District Council to the Hindustani Talimi Sangh. The school is not only self-supporting but half of the demand for Khadi from the village is met by the school. Acharya Bhave feels that in order to change the present pitiable conditions under which we are living, our teachers, students and the general mass of people should take to handicrafts, round which the educational system should revolve. Knowledge can be easily assimilated only through craft-work.

Vinobaji's aim is to make the village an ideal one, satisfying all its requirements, economic, social and moral. He believes in action. So he speaks little and does much in an unostentatious way. New schemes are under preparation by which land can be divided under heads and all the crops required by the villagers produced in the village itself.

APPENDIX

INFORMATION FOR VISITORS TO WARDHA

<i>Places of Interest</i>		<i>Tonga fare from Station</i>
		Rs. a.
1.	A. I. V. I. A., Udyog Bhawan, Magan- wadi (3 Furlongs)	0 6
2.	Magan Sangrahalaya (3 Furlongs) ...	0 6
3.	Laxminarayan Temple—the first in India to be thrown open to Harijans (3 Furlongs)	0 6
4.	The Go-seva Charmalaya Shop (3 Furlongs)	0 6
5.	Mahilashram (1½ Miles)	0 8
6.	Commerce College (1½ Miles)	0 8
7.	Gandhi Ashram at Sevagram (5 Miles) (To and From)	3 0
8.	Hindustani Talimi Sangh (5 Miles) (To and From)	3 0
9.	Gram Seva Mandal, Nalwadi (2 Miles) (To and From)	1 8
10.	The Go-seva Charmalaya, Nalwadi (2 Miles) (To and From)	1 8
11.	Sri Vinobaji's Ashram, Paunar (5 Miles) (To and From)	2 0

N.B.—All these institutions work from 7-30 to 11 a.m.
and 2 to 6 p.m.